

ask



SHIP

Q: I have Medicare. Will it pay for my dentist office visits or my vision and hearing screenings?

A. Original Medicare is health coverage and does not cover routine eye exams, glasses, or contacts.

Medicare DOES, however, cover an annual glaucoma test if you are considered at risk. It also covers cataract surgery and one pair of post-surgery eyeglasses from a Medicare-approved provider. It might also cover an annual test for diabetic retinopathy and screenings for macular degeneration.

Original Medicare does not cover routine dental care (cleanings, fillings, root canals, dentures, etc.).

Original Medicare may pay for medically necessary dental services that are related to other Medicare-covered procedures or injuries and will only pay Medicare-approved providers.

Original Medicare does not cover hearing screenings, hearing aids, or fittings. Your Part B DOES cover diagnostic hearing and balance exams if your doctor

orders them for treatment of a medical condition other than hearing loss.

If you have a Medicare Advantage Plan or Medicaid, check your individual plan to

see if additional vision, dental, or hearing services are covered.

The following chart also lists resources that may be able to help.

Vision

- Local Lions' Club chapters may have programs to assist those with severe vision impairment. <https://directory.lionsclubs.org/>
- EyeCare America®, a service of the Foundation of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, provides free eye exams and up to one year of care for low-income individuals who qualify. www.eyecareamerica.org or 1-877-887-6327.

Dental

- Local dental schools sometimes provide lower costs services as training to new dentists and hygienists. www.ada.org/267.aspx or www.adha.org/dental-hygiene-programs
- The Dental Lifeline Network offers free, comprehensive dental treatment to vulnerable people, including the elderly and those with disabilities. <http://dentallifeline.org/>
- Community Health Centers supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration provide health services, including dental care, to those with limited income. <http://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov>

Hearing

- Sertoma is a civic service organization that connects people with hearing assistance. www.sertoma.org/page.aspx?pid=335
- The Foundation for Sight and Sound, through its Help America Hear Program, provides hearing aids for those with limited financial resources. www.foundationforsightandsound.org/help_america_hear_program1.php

If you have questions about your Medicare coverage or anything else related to Medicare, contact SHIP for help. Call 1-800-452-4800, 866-846-0139 TDD, or visit www.medicare.in.gov. You can also find us on Facebook and Twitter.